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ABSTRACT

The effect of a highly-structured faculty development program that focused on improving teaching skills and writing productivity through weekly individual sessions was studied with 16 social sciences faculty. Participants were alternatively assigned to one of four groups that emphasized development in teaching skills, writing productivity, or a combination of both. In the writing program, faculty contracted for a regimen of time management with a priority on brief, daily periods of undisrupted writing. In the teaching skills program, faculty began with a structured sequence of role-playing and were then evaluated using videotape feedback. The following teaching skills were assessed: postural and vocal relaxation, use of expressive gestures, and organization and enthusiasm in lecturing. At weekly meetings, participants completed the Scholarly Activities Rating Scale (SARS) in order to assess their involvement in and attitudes toward a wide range of scholarly activities assumed to be relevant to faculty development. Findings indicate that emphases on both writing and teaching produced clear improvements in dimensions such as teaching success, teaching/work eagerness, and burnout. Scholarly writing appeared to produce a broad range of self-rated improvements in scholarly activities. A SARS form is appended. (SW)

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Which Factor, Teaching or Writing, Contributes More to Faculty Development?*

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Heretofore, teachers of psychology have been exposed to traditional notions about the independent natures of teaching and of scholarly writing. No wonder, perhaps, given the ostensible evidence: In small colleges where teaching is openly valued, publication is often deemphasized; in large universities, productive writers are rewarded with reduced teaching loads. Occasional findings of moderately positive interactions pale before more typical reports that institutions will not facilitate teaching by encouraging research/writing (Centra, 1983; Friedrich & Michalak, 1983).

Two considerations help clarify why this question of interactions is relevant for teachers of psychology: First, acceptance of an exclusionary or independent interaction, despite its questionable basis in survey evidence, is a divisive factor amongst us that acts to separate interests in teaching and in writing for publication (Weaver, 1982). Second, it results in a relative paucity of research on teaching in psychology, particularly by innovative teachers who have lost interest in reporting or carrying out systematic studies of classroom activities (Boice, 1983b).

The present research examines the interaction between teaching and writing in a format of faculty development. By inducing social sciences faculty to participate in highly structured programs designed to improve

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teaching skills and writing productivity, I hoped to avoid the pitfalls of usual correlational inquiries. That is, instead of assuming that the interactional question is best answered by estimating the occurrence of faculty who already excel in both dimensions, I attempted to measure changes in a variety of scholarly activities and attitudes as faculty were helped to measurably greater proficiency as teachers and/or writers.

Method

Subjects

Sixteen academicians were recruited as subjects through colloquia on faculty development and/or via referrals made by university administrators. All subjects held full-time academic appointments; five were female, 12 were untenured. Untenured subjects began participation by expressing a concern with gaining tenure. Tenured subjects gave 'burnout' as a common reason for entering this program.

Procedure

All subjects came to the author's office for an individual hourly meeting each week. Subjects were alternatively assigned (in strict order of their appearance over a two year period) to one of four groups that emphasized development in teaching skills, in writing productivity, or in a combination of both. The design is summarized here:

	16 weeks	16 weeks		
Grp. 1	WP	WP	(N = 4)	
Grp. 2	WP	WP & TSP	(N = 4)	(WP = Writing program)
Grp. 3	TSP	TSP	(N = 4)	(TSP = Teaching skills program)
Grp. 4	TSP	TSP & WP	(N = 4)	

In the writing program, faculty contracted for a regimen of time management with a priority on brief, daily periods of undisrupted writing. Once a four week of baseline measurements of writing productivity had passed, stable but modest levels of writing output were ensured with contingency management contracting (Boice, 1983a). A typical contingency was one where an output goal (e.g., 2pp/day) had to be met before access to a more preferred activity (e.g., daily showering) was permitted. Subjects in writing programs made daily entries in a graph of productivity that was verified via examination of manuscript pages in weekly meetings with the experimenter.

In the teaching skills program, faculty began with a structured sequence of role-playing their teaching performances in a simulated classroom setting. They were coached and evaluated (via videotape feedback) on seven specific teaching skills (see Boice & Monti, 1982, for rationale in this procedure based on techniques from social skills research): 1) postural relaxation, 2) vocal relaxation including pauses appropriate for note taking and questions, 3) appropriate use of expressive gestures such as hand movement and smiling, 4) clear indicatings of sensitivity to students' reactions including eye contact and other listening behaviors, 5) evidence of clear organization in lecturing, 6) evidence of clear and patient explanation in lecturing, 7) indications of enthusiasm and interest in lecturing.

Each skill was modeled for subjects. Performance on each dimension was then graded (1-7 scale of skillfulness) by both subject and author,

based on four successive, videotaped roleplays. Four more videotapes, also of 20 min. duration but taken from actual classroom performances, were then rated in similar fashion. As in earlier sessions, subjects roleplayed and practiced skills on which they received medium or low ratings. Where subjects continued in TSP during the second 16 wk. period, they carried out similar self-ratings of non-taped performances. These were followed by a final evaluation of a classroom lecture evaluated, as before, by both subject and experimenter.

All 16 subjects completed a copy of the Scholarly Activities Rating Scale (SARS) at each weekly meeting (copy attached). This self-rated form was designed to assess subjects' involvement in and attitudes toward a wide range of scholarly activities assumed to be relevant to faculty development.

Results & Discussion

Figure 1 shows the effects of contingency management on writing productivity. Levels remained fairly constant over both semesters, only slightly less so in the groups that combined WP and TSP. Figure 1 suggests that while involvement in a demanding regimen of teaching skills may produce some decrease in programmed writing output, the combination of activities nonetheless permits a credible and consistent level of writing for publication much like that evidenced in earlier research (Boice, 1983a).

Figure 2 shows comparable measures of teaching skill changes. The three groups evidenced improvements in all categories except two. Teachers in this sample seemed resistant to coaching or change in

'organization' or 'explanation'. Subjects who combined TSP & WP (Grps. 2 & 4) showed no obvious diminution in performance on teaching skills tasks as a result of simultaneous and/or previous involvement in programmed writing.

Figure 3, finally, indicates the relative effects of programs emphasizing teaching versus writing on the 16 dimensions of self-ratings by subjects on the SARS. Overall, the suggestion is that both formats of faculty development (an emphasis on writing or an emphasis on teaching) produced clear improvements in dimensions such as teaching success, teaching eagerness, work eagerness, and burn-out.

More important, Figure 3 suggests that scholarly writing can produce a broad range of self-rated improvements in scholarly activities including reading, teaching, interactions with students, collegiality, research, and attitudes about 'working'. On some dimensions of the SARS results such as burnout and work eagerness, there is a slight suggestion of superiority in combining teaching and writing programs. In no instance is there an indication that teaching and writing interact in harmful ways; where, for example, the addition of TSP to WS produced some decrease in ratings of time and success in writing, the decline was transient.

There are, of course, limitations in the generality of these data. Even though N=4 per group is an heroic number of usually stubborn and independent faculty who completed 8 mon. of demanding programs and of record keeping, the numbers are small. Nor is it likely that this sample of subjects was random or that the measures of teaching skills or

of scholarly activity were ideal. What this study does represent is a possible advance toward systematic manipulations and ratings in an area with little empirical precedent. The message here, then, is twofold: 1) Those of us who care about teaching can easily try out the kinds of manipulations and measurements described here, at the least with ourselves as subjects. 2) Psychologists with relatively exclusive investments in either teaching or in scholarly writing might profit in emphasizing both.

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Figure Captions

Figure 1. Productivity of scholarly writing during a baseline period, and in 28 successive weeks where goal levels of output were ensured by external contingencies. The two groups represented before the midline are WP (N=8) and TSP + WP (N=4); thereafter, the data show the relative effects of splitting the WP group into two subgroups, WP (N=4) and WP + TSP (N=4).

Figure 2. Subjects' self-ratings of seven teaching skills taken from 16 biweekly videotaped performances. Three successive stages are represented: a training phase where the experimenter also made ratings (role plays), a live-teaching phase with equivalent ratings (in vivo), and an in vivo phase where subjects alone made ratings. F.U. data points indicate a final session where both subject and experimenter rated the videotape of a classroom performance.

Figure 3. Subjects' self-ratings of 16 items in the Scholarly Activities Rating Scale. Data points before the midline represent the two basic approaches, of writing (N=8) and teaching (N=8) facilitation. Post midline points indicate the apparent effects of splitting those two groups into a crossover design that combined teaching and writing in half the subjects.

Name _____

Date _____

Scholarly Activities Rating Scale (Boice, 1980)

In each of the following items, please rate your feelings or level of participation as closely as possible for your scholarly activities within the last week.

1. How often did you engage in scholarly reading within the past week?

2. How eager were you to engage in scholarly reading in the past week?

3. How successful were you in meeting your goals for dealing with correspondence and related activities in the past week?

4. How successful were you as a classroom teacher in the past week?

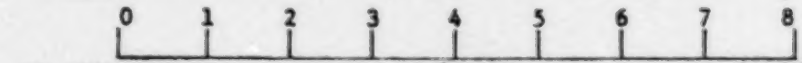
5. How eager were you to teach in the past week?

6. How frequent were your contacts with students outside classrooms in the past week?

7. How pleasant were your contacts with students in the past week?

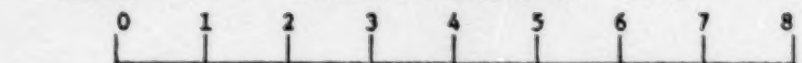
8. How often did you interact with colleagues in the past week?

9. How eager were you to interact with your colleagues in the past week?



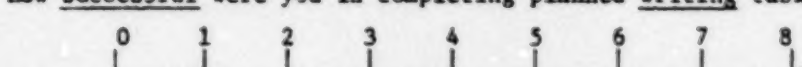
10. How much time did you devote to research in the past week?

11. How eager were you to engage in research in the past week?

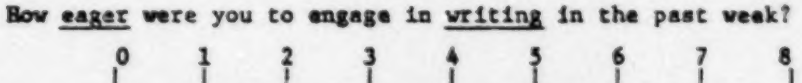


12. How much time did you devote to writing in the past week?

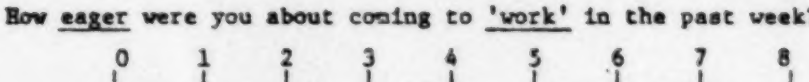
13. How successful were you in completing planned writing tasks in the past week?



14. How eager were you to engage in writing in the past week?



15. How eager were you about coming to 'work' in the past week?



16. How 'burned-out' did you feel about your 'job' in the past week?

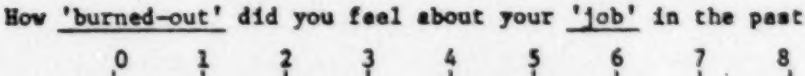


Fig. 1

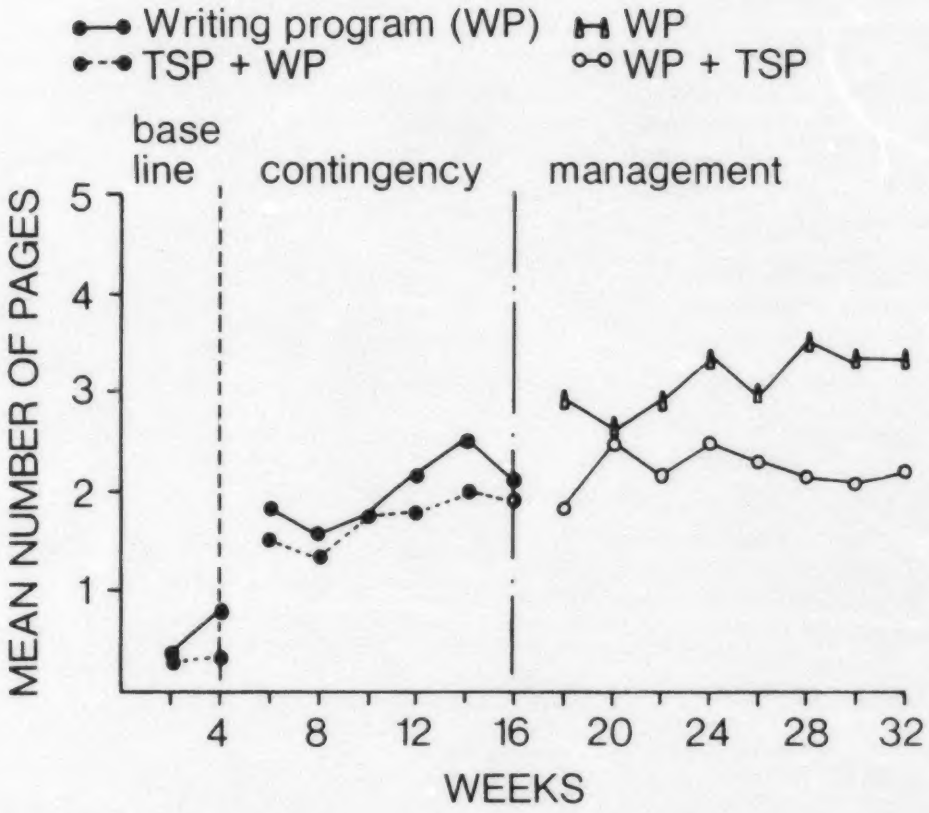

Writing program (WP)
TSP + WP
WP
WP + TSP
base line
contingency
management
MEAN NUMBER OF PAGES
5
4
3
2
1
4
8
12
16
20
24
28
32
WEEKS

Fig. 2

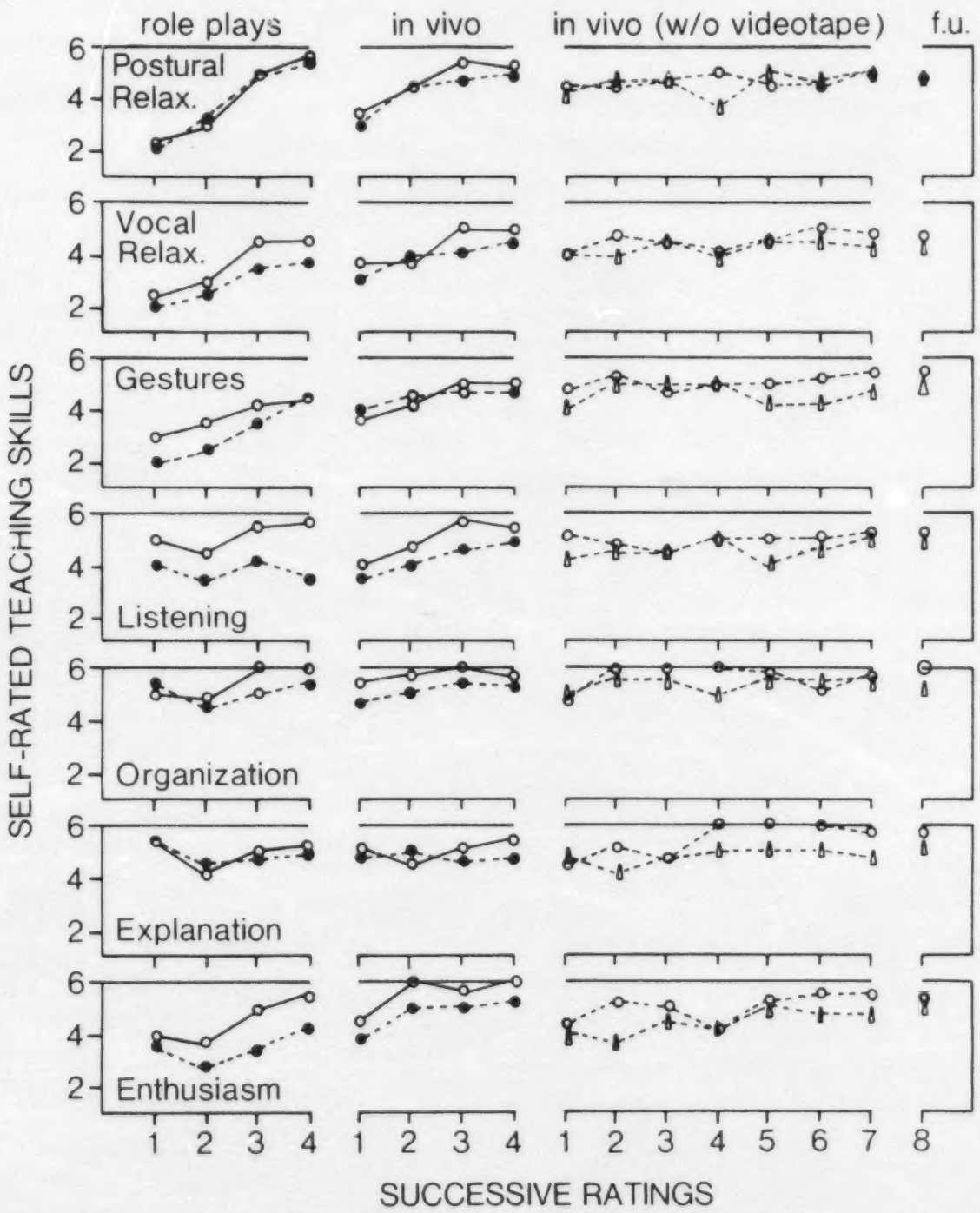
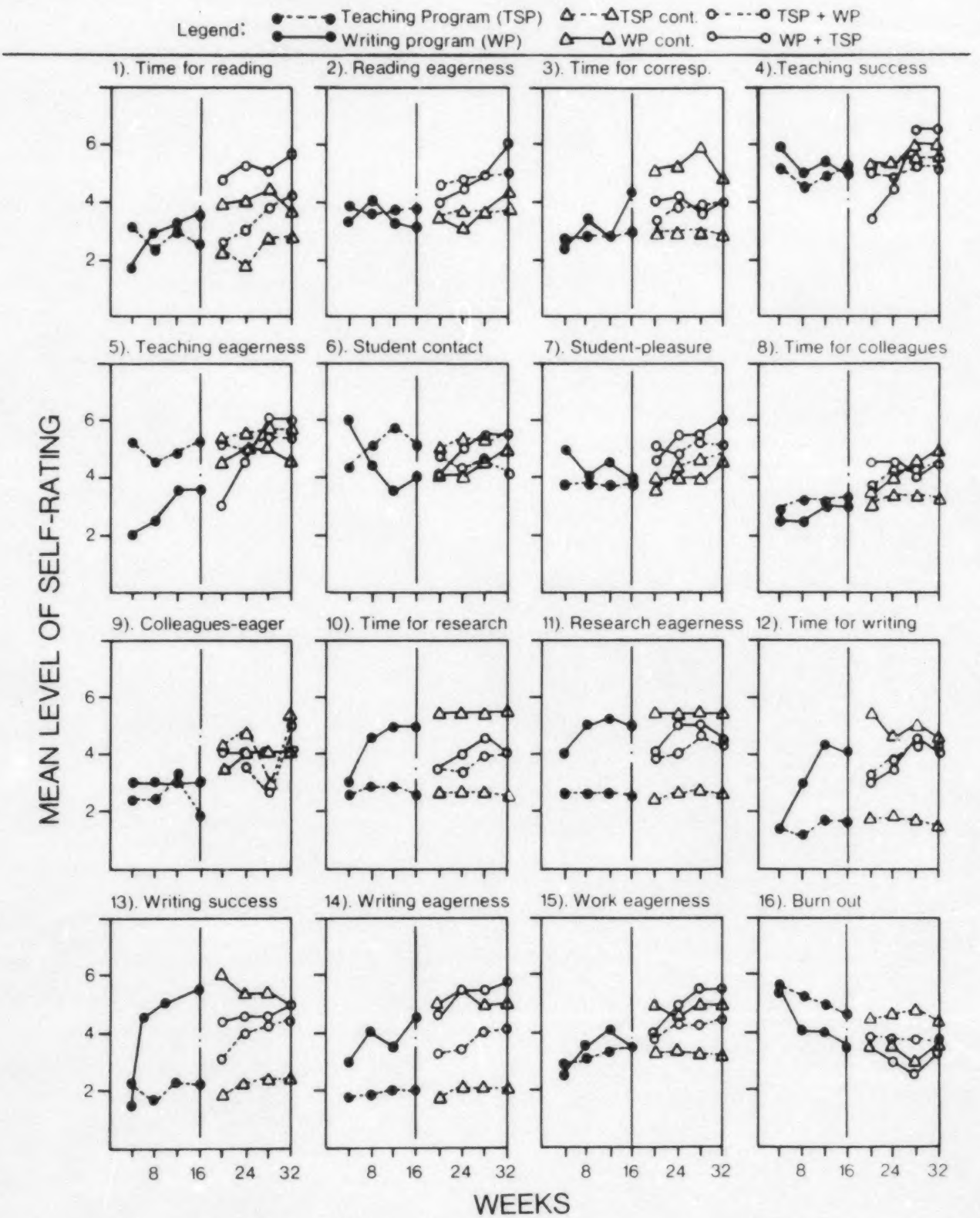

Legend: TSP TSP cont. TSP + WS WS + TSP
role plays
in vivo
in vivo (w/o videotape)
f.u.
Postural Relax.
Vocal Relax.
Gestures
Listening
Organization
Explanation
Enthusiasm
SELF-RATED TEACHING SKILLS
SUCCESSIVE RATINGS

Fig. 3


Legend:
Teaching Program (TSP)
Writing program (WP)
TSP cont.
WP cont.
TSP + WP
WP + TSP
1). Time for reading
2). Reading eagerness
3). Time for corresp.
4).Teaching success
5). Teaching eagerness
6). Student contact
7). Student-pleasure
8). Time for colleagues
9). Colleagues-eager
10). Time for research
11). Research eagerness
12). Time for writing
13). Writing success
14). Writing eagerness
15). Work eagerness
16). Burn out
MEAN LEVEL OF SELF-RATING
WEEKS
2
4
6
8
16
24
32